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3-27-1986

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### Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "03/27/1986 - John White" (1986). 1986. 287.  
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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
Charleston, Illinois

## news

HARRY READ, Director of Information and Publications (217) 581-2820

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 27 7

CHARLESTON, IL.--John White, president of the state's largest farm organization, the Illinois Agricultural Association, will be the keynote luncheon speaker at Thursday's (April 3) Economic Development Conference at Eastern Illinois University.

White's address will be tied to the conference's theme of 'Jobs for the Future . . . Using Illinois Products'.

Sponsored by the East Central Illinois Development Corporation, this one day mini-convention is "stressing agri-business . . . using Illinois products and services, and then marketing those products and services," said Dr. Ted Ivarie, dean of the EIU College of Business.

The deadline for attending the conference has been extended until Noon Monday (March 31). Anyone interested should call the EIU Continuing Education Office at 581-5114. Registration fee is \$35. All sessions will be held in the University Union.

"Nearly all farmers are exasperated by the chronically depressed state of the farm economy. We want a change that will mean more net income for farm income," said White, who along with his sons operates a 1500 acre grain farm in northeastern Illinois.

"Consumers are concerned because they understand that an ongoing threat to the health and welfare of the family farm is ultimately a threat to the entire food system," he said.

Ivarie said the session panelists were selected because "they are people in our region who are successful entrepreneurs in commodities and services that relate to the economy of this area.

"Therefore we hope to be able to revive the entrepreneurship spirit by providing some direction, some hope and some vision of potential for those who attend."

Governor James Thompson says, "Today Illinois is at the crossroads of economic development. The future of Illinois' economy rests on ensuring its place in the world marketplace. This administration is firmly committed to a policy of expanding existing markets and creating new markets throughout the globe.

"Through conferences such as this one in east central Illinois, we can work toward the establishment of essential markets for Illinois agricultural goods."

The conference schedule includes sessions on local creative financing, marketing Illinois commodities, tourism and redevelopment and entrepreneurship/high technology.